A Study of Neocolonial Dynamics in Select Works of Ngugi Wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah

A Synopsis

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Overview

As a concept in postcolonial studies, ‘neocolonialism’ refers to the persistence of colonialism. Indirect control is the process of exerting influence on emerging or less developed states. Neocolonialism is a term that has been used throughout history to refer to European policies that were seen as efforts to preserve control over African governments and other dependencies. It was in his book Colonialism and Neocolonialism, published in 1964, that Jean-Paul Sartre first used the word. Jean-Paul Sartre coined the phrase in his 1964 book *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*. In this passage, he expresses his disapproval of France's continued dominance over its former colonies and proposes a solution: independence. In 1965, the word was given a more definite meaning with the publication of *Neocolonialism: The Last of Imperialism* by Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana.

Immediately after colonial independence, Neocolonialism manifests itself in practice, mirroring its devastating effects on impoverished and emerging countries. It put the economic, political, and social progress of those nations and their people at risk. As a result, many countries are politically and financially reliant on the wealthy and industrialised nations. Economic, financial, and trade policies are examples of neocolonialism's indirect methods of acquiring influence over countries.

Neocolonialism soon broadened its application, that is, to places where the powerful and developed nations used it to produce colonial-like impact and exploitation. Rich and developed nations started making use of economic power and systems to achieve their goals in various ways, such as through international financial institutions (the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank), multinational corporations, and local leaders. Because of their huge network and establishment in different countries, they have always been focused on acquiring resources at a lower cost to make more and more profit. Such corporations

invest money to create employment in developing nations; however, this is not the actual reality. They only tend to make their economies stronger because of the huge profits they make from these developing nations.

Neocolonialism has always been practised by the leaders of the rich and powerful nations through the local leaders of the poor and weaker nations. Internal conflicts provide them with unintentional support, resulting in the benefits of the elites on both sides, and only the workers and common masses suffer throughout the globe. The former colonisers enjoyed direct influence and control over the ex-colonised nations through the native ruling leaders and the cooperation of the native elites that they left behind. Ngugi wa Thiong'o is of the view that decolonisation is not achieved in all respects, except political decolonisation. African countries are still grappling with the problems created by the process of colonisation.

Three main factors contributed to the European conquest of African territories during the Industrial Revolution: access to raw resources, control over trade routes, and a larger market for European-produced products. The process of colonising Africa started in the second part of the 1800s and was completed in the mid-century of the 1900s.

The goal of the neocolonial powers, with the support of international organisations, is to maintain political and cultural supremacy over the developing world while simultaneously exploiting their people and their resources. Nkrumah says that to expunge neocolonialism, they have to aim at the eradication of the evil intentions of the capitalists and investors.

State of Art

Born in 1938, James wa Thiong'o Ngugi, better known as Ngugi wa Thiong'o, ranks among the highest within the twentieth-century Kenyan literary canon. It was the peak of British colonialism when he was born. Makerere University was his alma mater in 1963. *Weep Not Child*, his first work, was out in 1963, while *The River Between*, his second, came

out in 1964. James wa Thiong'o Ngugi became Ngugi wa Thiong'o while working as a professor in the Department of English at the University of Nairobi. *Petals of Blood*, his next novel, was released in 1977 set in post-independence Kenya. He penned *Caitani Mutharabaine* in 1980, which was then translated into English and reissued in 1982 as *Devil on the Cross* as part of the famous African Writers Series. In this work, the author explores the lingering effects of colonial rule and the ways in which globalisation has altered the way indigenous people go about their everyday lives.

Ayi Kwei Armah, born in 1939, is a Ghanaian novelist, poet, essayist, and translator. He got his degree in sociology from Harvard University. Further, he joined the struggle for the African liberation of Algeria. Because of his ill health, he returned to Ghana and wrote his first novel, *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born,* in 1968, which deals with the political corruption in Africa. In his second novel *Fragments,* published in 1970, an autobiographical one, he talked about the challenges of an intellect to be in a place where the culture is inclined towards material possessions and to look down towards one's own heritage and cultural identity. His fourth novel, *Two Thousand Seasons,* published in 1973, is considered to be the most ambitious novel he has published. In this novel, he discusses how the corrupt and destructive forces of European nations are putting the indigenous way of life at stake. He put his expression of a thousand seasons being wasted, getting mesmerised towards the alien roads, and another thousand wasted upon returning to the right path. He refers to Western influences as '*a highway to its own extinction*' (Armah xi).

Review of Literature

In the book *Student Encyclopaedia of African Literature,* Douglas Killam and Alicia L. Kerfoot give a brief overview of the writers 'life, careers, and works and their significant contributions to African literature. The book very well provides the background to understand

the need to carry out such research.

Ndirangu Mwaura discusses the effects of foreign assistance, trade policies, and other types of foreign influence on Kenya and other impoverished African states in his book *Kenya Today: Breaking the Yoke of Colonialism in Africa.* We become aware of cultural imperialism and the African educational system via this effort.

According to Elham Hossain's paper "*A Man of the People: A Study of the Post-Independence Situation of the Collective Consciousness in Neocolonial Nigeria of the 1960s*" local elites in the area worked to further the goals of their former colonisers. Along with neocolonialism, he explains their awareness in relation to their exploitative position.

In the article, Kwadwo Osei-Nyame, Jnr. examines Ayi Kwei Armah's book Fragments through the lens of neo-colonialism and identity crisis, two major topics in African literature. In order to mitigate the effects of neocolonialism on African countries, the article deepens our comprehension of the significance of nation-building and nationalism.

In the book *The Decolonisation of Africa,* David Birmingham, University of Kent, provides an interpretation of decolonisation from his own choice of themes and ideas, which provides a different perspective on understanding African decolonisation.

In the book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism,* Ania Loomba provides immense clarity on the key concepts needed to understand the beginning of neocolonialism. The terms have been described in a very comprehensive way, which acts as a desired guide for us to comprehend the emerging literary ideologies around the globe.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* shed light on the ways in which colonialism has impacted African culture and the ideas held by young Africans today. Imperialism is examined at several socio-cultural and political levels in this study.

In the article, *Postcolonial Disgust or Regenerative Vision?: The Values and Significance of "The Man" in Ayi Kwei Armah's The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born,* Setor Donne Novieto takes us close to Ghanaian values and portrays optimism for change in natives and nations through the character of Man. Here, he tried to explore the root cause of the new postcolonial Ghana.

In Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth,* the readers come across the process of decolonisation in the background of the postwar world. The book provides a wide range of perspectives and interpretations.

In the book *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism, Kwame Nkrumah* helps us understand the factors responsible for neocolonialism, like personal profits, unequal developments, increasing evil forces of socialism and struggles for real independence from capitalism.

In the book *Beginning Theory,* Peter Barry again adds clarity to the basic concepts of colonialism, postcolonialism, decolonisation, and neocolonialism. It helps navigate the study of concepts in the right direction.

The Postcolonial Studies Dictionary adds to the knowledge and understanding of terms like colonial, postcolonial, and neocolonial.

What is Post-colonialism? An essay by Vijay Mishra and Bob Hodge discusses the background to colonial terms, and their forms, and adds to the existing knowledge and content.

The Empire Writes Back by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin describes the theory related to the development of postcolonial literature, its various implications, and how to draw meaning from a postcolonial perspective.

The Routledge Companion to Postcolonial Studies, edited by John McLeod, provides

the colonial histories of major European empires. It enriches knowledge about diverse postcolonial and cultural efforts ranging from Africa to East Asia. It also adds to the understanding of major theoretical formulations.

Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts, Third Edition, by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin helps understand the key issues that characterise postcolonialism. It also adds content about race, gender, politics, language, and identity. It analyses postcolonialism in glocal time.

Research Gap

The existing literary works and research show different aspects of neocolonialism and various terms have been used but are not appropriately explained and left to be understood by the readers. This provides the need to explore and discuss the roots of neocolonialism, in the background of its colonial past and its dynamic nature. Further, this research work will focus on the social, political and economic challenges that the European nations are posing in Africa.

Problems to be Investigated

It was in Jean-Paul Sartre's 1964 book *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* that the term Neocolonialism was first introduced. Following the 1965 release of *Neocolonialism: The Last of Imperialism* by Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, the word quickly gained even more specific use. The topic of Neocolonialism, as brought to light by African novelists such as Ayi Kwei Armah and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, is the dominant power's use of culture, knowledge, politics, and human and natural resource exploitation with the support of multinational institutions.

When we talk of Neocolonialism, it is impossible not to mention other terms like imperialism, colonialism, decolonisation and globalisation. Having an understanding of terms

like colonialism, imperialism, decolonisation, postcolonialism, and neocolonialism, this work will try to search for and analyse the impact of neocolonialism upon the lives of people from former colonies, their culture, their changing relationships with one another, their dignity, and their exploitation. This work will also trace the need for the term *neocolonialism* in order to talk about the current state of Africa.

This work will discuss the select works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah in detail to analyse the elements, nuances, and perspectives towards the implications of the term neocolonialism.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

Neocolonialism is the practice of implementing indirect ways, in the form of trade policies, investments, local elites, etc., to gain control over the poor and developing nations. The term *neocolonial refers* to economic dependency, which provides a gateway for exploitative influences upon the economy, culture, and politics of a nation. Africa being a neocolonial state, the former masters are devising strategies and ensuring that the newly independent nation is dependent on them in terms of economy and politics. This work aims to bring the neocolonial elements and their nuances to the surface that are impacting the lives and development of Africa. In this context, this work attempts:

I. To analyze the elements of Neocolonialism, such as foreign influence, exploitation, interference in internal matters by external forces, poverty, identity crisis, loss of dignity, and capitalist exploitation.
II. To investigate the nuances of neocolonialism that are determining the dynamics of the socio-cultural and political condition of Africa.
III. To identify the impact of neocolonialism on the characters, specifically in the select novels by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah.

IV. To explain the impact of neocolonialism on Africa.

V. To explore the range of representation of neocolonial aspects in the novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah.

VI. To elucidate the major themes in the selected novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah.

Hypothesis

The proposed research may be an attempt to analyse the socio-economic and political perspectives of the novelists as reflected in their works. The study may add unprecedented aspects and elements to the works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah. Neocolonialism may be a new system of colonisation and a phenomenon of exploitation in modern Africa.

The study of neo-colonialism adds to a better understanding of the prevailing conditions in Africa. This will help in an accurate and appropriate analysis of the select works by Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah. Studying the evolution from colonialism to neocolonialism and now towards globalisation helps us to mark even the minor but significant occurrences that might be reflected through the characters and backgrounds portrayed in the select novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah.

Scope and Limitations

The research work aims to analyse the current condition of Africa through the lens of neocolonialism to understand why Africa is still critically dependent on European nations. The information required to carry out the research effectively is abundant in the select works. The study is based on the works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah, which provide an adequate and appropriate scope for research. It will enable the people to concentrate more towards the social, political and economic challenges in the context of neocolonialism.

Reading the selected novels will help me explore major themes and elements of neocolonialism. However, accessibility to a limited number of texts and the addition of several research papers in various journals reflect the incompleteness of the existing knowledge on this subject.

Research Methodology

The current study is academic research based on the chronological development of the term Neocolonialism, its growth in African literature, its significance, and its impact on social, political, and economic aspects. We find three methods appropriate for this study: the historical, descriptive, and analytical methods. Using the historical method, we try to trace the origin and development of the term neocolonial. The use of descriptive and analytical methods will enable us to sort and analyse the accumulated contents in the novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah.

The work can also be perceived from a descriptive-qualitative approach, in which we intend to draw the author's desired meaning in the most accurate way. It includes a description of the elements present in the plays and a comprehensive study of the application of the elements of Neocolonialism. The study will help us establish the dynamic nature of the term neocolonialism in the select works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah.

Tools to be Used

As the proposed study needs to be done under the Faculty of Humanities, the tools to be used are books, journals, magazines, extracts from interviews and speeches, the Internet, etc. In-depth reading of the novels will be done to critically analyse the works in relation to the topic.

Plan of the Work

This research is anticipated to be divided into the following chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction

Chapter II: Literature Review

Chapter III: Understanding Neocolonialism

Chapter IV: A Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah as Leading Neocolonial Novelists

Chapter V: Neocolonial Dynamics in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood, Devil on the Cross, Matigari*

Chapter VI: Neocolonial Dynamics in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born, Fragments, Two Thousand Seasons*

Chapter VII: Conclusion

Bibliography

Chapter I: Introduction

Kwame Nkrumah describes the term *Neocolonialism* as: "Neocolonialism represents the final stage of imperialism. Neocolonialism is the worst form of imperialism; for those who practice it, it means power without responsibility, and for those who suffer it, it is exploitation without redress" (5).

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica "Neocolonialism, the control of less-developed countries by developed countries through indirect means."

Dominance over emerging nations via colonial exploitation regulations is an example of "indirect means," as Sandra Halperin explains. Neocolonialism, as a term, was applied to European policies to maintain their control over Africa. The dominating effect of

neocolonialism has been mostly seen in economics, accompanied by political and cultural exploitation. Nkrumah rightly said that political independence is pointless without economic independence. Nkrumah considers their independence meaningless because of the economic exploitation of Africa.

In the ‘All African People’s Conference ’of 1961, the term neocolonialism had its first official definition “As the deliberate and continued survival of the colonial system in independent African states, by turning these states into victims of political, mental, economic, social, military, and technical forms of domination carried out through indirect and subtle means that did not include direct violence” (Martin 191).

Here, the term *dynamics* is being used to study the Neocolonial condition prevailing in Africa and the evolution of the term Neocolonialism. It has been shown in the post-colonial studies that the former colonies still harbour colonial influences, even after getting independence, and constitute the subject matter of neocolonialism.

The term *dynamics* could be described as the way people behave and react to one another in a specific situation. The term studies the elements that influence growth, change, or development. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, “Dynamics is a pattern or process of change, growth, or activity.”

Chapter II: Literature Review

It is necessary to study appropriate content and sources before proceeding with research work. The study of neocolonialism in Africa has been of great significance and is even more so because of its more pressing concerns. The concepts of colonialism, imperialism, decolonisation, postcolonialism, neocolonialism, and globalisation are to be studied for the analysis of the select novels of Ngugi wa Thiong’o and Ayi Kwei Armah. Works written in relation to neocolonialism are to be thoroughly studied.

Chapter III: Understanding Neocolonialism

To understand the aspects of neocolonialism in the present socio-political and economic state of Africa, we need to trace the evolution of the term colonialism, followed by the terms imperialism, decolonisation and globalisation. This chapter provides an in-depth study of literary concepts and theories ranging from colonialism to globalisation.

In literary studies, the term "colonialism" is most often used to characterise the spread of European culture and government over hitherto uninhabited regions in the Americas, Oceania, and Asia. The word mostly refers to the 19th-century European empires, although the growth of religion, riches, and resources were the main motivating factors. The forceful establishment of political, military, and economic institutions to maintain power is known as colonisation. The colonisers receive raw materials, labour, a market for the sale of their goods, and soldiers for their administration. The colonisers also brought their practices, whether it was about religion, or education, or language. To sum up, by dismissing the indigenous people as backwards, they were eradicating their culture, history, and beliefs.

The term colonialism is closely related to the term ‘imperialism. ’Edward Said says, “Imperialism means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory” (Said 8). Said considers‘ ideological force ’as imperialism and its ‘practice ’as colonialism. In terms of economy, the colonies provided the raw materials that strengthened the rapid progress of colonial powers and created a rigid relationship between a coloniser and colonised that was resistant to fair, reasonable, and equal treatment in every aspect.

At its core, colonialism is best understood by dividing it into two separate periods: the modern colonialism and the earlier colonialism. Colonialism in the past was pre-capitalist, but contemporary colonialism encompasses more than simply the acquisition of material

gain. After modern colonialists remade their subjects' economies and entangled them with their own, they pried human beings and natural resources (from the colonised to the colonisers) from them so that they could manufacture goods in their urban centres. It also encouraged a captive market for European goods. The economy was so intricately woven that, in whatever way the human resources or raw materials moved, profits always flowed back to the colonisers. Soon, colonialism became the key to the development of the European economy and capitalism. Ania Loomba talks about this in her work, '*Colonialism*/ *Postcolonialism* 'as "...colonialism was the midwife that assisted at the birth of European capitalism, or that without colonial expansion, the transition to capitalism could not have taken place in Europe" (10).

Gradually, the class became evident for the colonised: labourers, domestic servants, travellers, and traders, and for the colonisers: administrators, soldiers, merchants, settlers, travellers, authors, domestic workers, missionaries, educators, scientists, etc.

Both terms, *colonialism* and *imperialism,* are often used without much distinction in meaning; however, there is a slight distinction in meaning. *Colonialism* is applied in the context of colonial effects on the lives of those living in the colonies, whereas *imperialism* is used in the context of the expansion of the dominion of the ruling power, followed by dominating force. In its simplest form, the term imperialism could be described as command or superior power. The term can also be studied as a distinction between pre-capitalist and capitalist colonialism. Vladimir Lenin, in his 1917 work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism (*originally published as *Imperialism, the Newest Stage of Capitalism)*, discussed the scenario where the Western countries had an enormous superabundance of capital that would not have been profitable if invested at home. Thus, they move out towards the non-industrialised countries to sustain their own profit and growth. They exported the capital to

less developed countries in search of higher profits. Gradually, this led to the seeking of control over the less developed countries and the exploitation of the weaker ones. *Lenin* talks of the possibility that the rest of the world would be absorbed in this global system of European finance capitalists, termed imperialism.

Based on this distinction between *colonialism* and *imperialism,* a new question comes to mind: Is colonial rule required for the continuation of imperialism? However, the explanation requires a different approach, which provides the groundwork for terms like n*eo-imperialism* or *neo-colonialism* in the context of their historical development.

This leads to the fluctuating meaning of the term *postcolonial.* A country may be both postcolonial and neocolonial simultaneously. The term *postcolonial* refers to the nations being formally independent, and *neocolonial* refers to their economic dependency. Although the status of once-colonised nations as post-colonial nations is debatable, it allows certain economic, cultural, and political influences over others. However, there is no direct colonial control. It would be right to say that the term *postcolonial* is ambiguous in its meaning.

The term *decolonisation* can be studied at different levels. It refers to the loosening of colonialism by the European nations over the colonies. *Decolonisation* reveals and breaks down colonist power in all its aspects. *Decolonisation* is not something that could be achieved at the time of independence; rather, it is a complex and continuous process. An Indian historian and sinologist, Prasenjit Duara, defines *decolonisation* as “the process whereby colonial powers transferred institutional and legal control over their territories and dependencies to indigenously based, formally sovereign nation-states.” He puts more emphasis on local power shifts than on the breakdown of empires. The political elites of the last remaining colonial powers, like Great Britain and France, thought to engineer a way to transfer power to trustworthy native leaders belonging to former colonies. They strategised to

fulfil the political goal of the Europeans, adding a different perspective towards *Decolonisation.*

Globalisation can simply be described as the interdependency of world economies, politics, people, and their cultures. This is carried out through trade, goods and services, investment, technology, and information. The effects of advancing globalisation are complex and political and run parallel to its negative impact on certain groups. Although Africa gained independence in the 1960s, it was only a mirage. The ongoing neocolonialism and globalisation redefined African independence. Under both of these terms, Africa had been dominated and exploited by the former European colonisers. Neocolonialism is the dominance over former colonies and developing nations by the Western powers. Globalisation integrated the global economy through free trade, investments, and the exploitation of cheap labour and raw materials. Both *neocolonialism* and *globalisation* are reflected through economic dominance, indirect political influence, and manipulative use of culture for the benefit of the Western powers. The mixing up of *neocolonialism* and *globalisation* has emerged as a challenge for nation-building, progress, and development in Africa, which could be seen as political and economic instability and alienation.

Chapter IV: A Study of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah as Leading Neocolonial Novelists

This chapter will discuss the biographies and literary works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah.

Formerly known as James Ngugi, Ngugi wa Thiong'o is a Kenyan novelist, essayist, and playwright. He was born in a village- Kamiriithu, near Limuru, Kenya. He attended the Church of Scotland Mission Primary School for his early education and earned a degree in

English from Makerere University College, Kampala, in 1964. He served as the chairperson of the Department of Literature at the University of Nairobi from 1973 to 1977, making history as the first African to hold that position. During his exile, he taught at Yale and New York University.

In 1961, under the working title The Black Messiah, Ngugi finished penning what would become 1965's *The River Between*. In 1962, he wrote *Weep Not Child,* which was published in 1964. His incarceration was a direct outcome of his transition into journalism and commentary on social and political issues. The book Detained was published as a result of this incarceration (1981). His subsequent works include *A Grain of Wheat*(1967), *Petals of Blood*(1977), *Devil on the Cross*(1980), and *Matigari*(1986). Ngugi as a thinker and as an artist can be better understood in three stages. The first one begins in 1960 and concludes in 1964, the year he graduated from Makerere University. Second, between 1964 and 1976, he is introduced to Marxism, Frantz Fanon, and pan-Africanism; during this period, he reflects the effects of the Gikuyu social and cultural tradition, Christianity, and Western liberal philosophy. The third, beginning in 1976 and continuing to the present day, is characterised by the Ngugi's last disappointment with bourgeois nationalism and their hopelessness for the future of Kenya and Africa.

A shift in Ngugi's literary style towards greater metaphor and fantastical elements emerged from his determination to write only in his home language. One of the key themes is the invasion of money and power by external forces and the ongoing resistance of the indigenous population against usurpation.

Ayi Kwei Armah is a novelist, poet, and essayist who has done reviews and critical analyses. His writings, nevertheless, have brought him the most fame. Sekondi-Takoradi, the capital of Ghana's Western Region and a twin harbour city, is where he was born. He attended

Achimota School for his elementary schooling. He has written scripts for Radio of Ghana and worked as a reporter and announcer. He acquired his postgraduate degrees from Harvard and Columbia at the age of nineteen. He focused his writings on the revival of the African past and re-exploring the postcolonial aspects of Africa. Ayi Kwei Armah identifies himself not only as a Ghanaian, a West African but as an African. His works reflect upon Africa as a community without unity, for which he insists on a community with unity. His best-known novels are *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born (1968),* which exposes the corruption in government; *Fragments (1970), which is* autobiographical in nature and talks of postcolonial Africa; *Why Are We So Blest? (1972), which* depicts contemporary Africa and analyses the postcolonial local elites and their preferences for European culture; *Two Thousand Seasons (1973), which* talks of Africa's past; and *The Healers (1978),* a fictional work.

Chapter V: Neocolonial Dynamics in Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood, Devil on the Cross, Matigari*

This chapter will analyse the select works of Ngugi wa Thiong'o from a neocolonial perspective. It will enable us to gain an understanding of the influences and impacts of neocolonialism on the daily lives of the African people.

Petals of Blood is the fourth novel published in 1977. The work deals with the theme of the progress of a Kenyan village from a traditional to a modern industrial town, leading to the destruction of the original beauty and suffering for the habitats, as well as issues of social abuse, exploitation, and injustice. Most importantly, the connection between the local elite and departed colonisers. This connection led to the emergence of a new upper class.

The novel is set in post-independence Kenya. Munira, Karega, Abdulla, and Wanja are interrogated at the beginning of the book on the triple murder of three prominent Kenyan

businessmen—Kimeria, Mzigo, and Chui. The first twelve years of the book are devoted to flashbacks, detailing the four protagonists' journey to Ilmorog.

The plot of the novel reflects the idea that all the new modern developments are merely to hide the fact that people are losing their own power. This is remarkable because of its strong political themes, which include capitalism, westernisation, education, and neocolonialism.

The novel *Devil on the Cross is* set in the postcolonial landscape of 1980s Kenya. The central theme of the novel is about the influence of international culture and currency in the daily lives of every citizen, even after having its own legislature and government, and is seen as a residue of colonial oppression. The work discusses the postcolonial conditions between the characters that have empowered local tycoons and compradors. Through the characters, Ngugi has reflected that the people in power are Kenyan but serve at the feet of foreigners and make themselves accessible to be manipulated by foreign money. We are clearly able to see the capitalist exploitation. The novel depicts the condition where the imperialistic truth is hidden from the people. The novel talks of a devil's feast where thieves and traitors gather together, which enables the post-colonial system of capitalism. (In the feast, there are local tycoons presenting barbaric, inhumane, and exploitative proposals in order to be crowned by a delegation of foreigners.).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Matigari* revolves around the enigmatic protagonist Matigari, who manages to survive his nation's independence fight. He emerges back after four decades with a vow to resolve issues and concerns without any violent act. His country has now completely changed. His people are now workers at a factory of which Settler William's and John Boys 'sons are the owners. Matigari further went to claim an enormous plantation that was supposed to be Matigari's but is now under the position of the Sons of Settler William

and John Boy. Matigari's frequent interactions with the injustices of the people made him roam the country seeking truth and justice. He went to the students and church to seek help, but they refused to help him. He finally went to the Minister for Truth and Justice, where he was before representatives from a number of Western countries, stating several policies on human rights violations, like ending workers 'strikes, banning gatherings of more than five people, and arresting those who talk communism. Soon, Matigari, Ngaruro, and other prisoners were sent to mental asylums, as they called this system unlawful and exploitative in nature. The circumstances made Matigari break his vow, as the words and reasoning alone were not enough to bring about the change.

The novel reflects the neocolonial elements: the role of local elites in the ex-colonised land, embracing Western values and thoughts, the superiority of a European-centric world over the native culture, the authoritative political system, the exploitation of native people by the local elites, and the division of people into two categories: those who demand their land regain its complete independence and, secondly, those who aim to help the colonisers.

Chapter VI: Neocolonial Dynamics in Ayi Kwei Armah's *Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born, Fragments, Two Thousand* Seasons

This chapter will analyse the select works of Ayi Kwei Armah from a neocolonial perspective. This will help to explore the neocolonial elements in the select novels of Ayi Kwei Armah and to understand the functioning of former colonial powers in the lives of African citizens.

Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born is the first novel written by Ayi Kwei Armah, and published in 1968. The novel revolves around a nameless man struggling to settle himself in post-independent Ghana. Through the characters, Armah reflects on corruption, loss of dignity, poverty, material luxuries, criticism by his own people, and foreign influences, all

leading to self-doubt, isolation, and identity crises. The work also depicts solitary marginalisation, that is, the division of people among different classes, and ultimately spiritual darkness. The central idea of the novel, the revulsion against corruption and disillusionment, is depicted by the character of THE MAN, who goes through his corrupt society while simultaneously trying to maintain his honesty and integrity. The acquisition of monetary wealth and material wealth has been represented as closeness to Western society. These acquisitions are considered the grounds for corruption, resulting in a lack of human values in society and a lack of confidence in the post-independence Ghanaian socio-economic and political system.

The novel *Fragments* is the second novel, written by Ghanaian writer Ayi Kwei Armah and published in 1970. The novel revolves around the characters Baako and Brempong, both returning from the United States to their Ghanaian families, who are disillusioned by Western-inspired materialism and moral decay. Baako is concerned with the material and spiritual development of his nation by sharing his intellectual capabilities. His stay in the United States made him more aware of the struggles of his own people.

On the other hand, Brempong personifies the Western, materialistic, acquisitive society that views material possessions as the key to happiness. The neocolonial feature of the Western supra-state apparatus's domination in Ghanaian society is reflected in the book, which leads to a decline in the people's productive ability and encourages them to become consumers of the West. The narrative went on to stress how important it is for Africans to recover their heritage from the colonisers.

Even though he has been fighting an internal conflict between his European upbringing and his African identity, the book highlights the importance of culture, politics, and education in building a country. Ayi Kwei Armah portrays in his book an ideological

schism between those who stand for moral decay and adultery in the West and others who want a spiritual rebirth for Africa.

In several places, Armah exemplifies the colonial mindset, which educates its adherents to devalue their own cultural traditions and history in favour of those of other groups.

Two *Thousand Seasons* is a novel written by Ayi Kwei Armah that talks about the lost history of Africa. It depicts the encounters between people of African descent, Arabs, and Europeans. Armah talks of chiefs and kings who came into existence only after the arrival of the colonisers. Before, they had caretakers, who were the ones with the beauty of mind and character, carefully selected from any family for the wellbeing of their people. The novel could also be considered the fulfilment of Wole Soyinka's idea concerning the functioning of African literature, that is, to reconstruct the past for the purposes of social direction. The plot takes us to a time when Africa's society and culture were unflawed, but their indigenous way of life was endangered by the corrupt and destructive forces of Arab and European nations.

The title itself speaks of a thousand seasons wasted being amazed along the alien road and another thousand to find or return to the right path. Armah writes, "Woe the race, too generous in the giving of itself, that finds a highway not of regeneration but a highway to its own extinction" (Armah xi).

The work reflects upon the societies that have become alienated and lost their sense of belongingness, resulting in the socio-economic dependencies of Western nations. The novelist here is seeking an egalitarian social, economic, and political system to resolve the issues of the majority. He states that, regardless of the treacherous acts done by the chiefs and leaders, there is hope for the Africans to come back to the track, but not immediately and completely, as they can only lay the road for the future generation. In the hands of the novelist Ayi Kwei

Armah, writing is a tool to reconstruct the fragmented realities caused by colonialism and neocolonialism.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

This chapter will attempt to provide an overview of the research work. The analysis of the selected novels of Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah will enable us to gain and enrich our understanding of the prevailing African conditions. In parallel to the analysis of the novels, the work will also explore the shift and need for terms like colonialism, imperialism, decolonisation, postcolonialism, and neocolonialism.

Significance of the Study

Although Africa is now an independent nation, it is still critically dependent on European countries. Nkrumah talks of shutting the doors against ongoing trade from the West, not being dependent on foreign influences, and developing themselves using their own resources. Tracing the history of colonialism helps us to explain the roots of the current situation in Africa and to prepare a framework for discussion. In this work, we are trying to analyse the current situation in Africa through the lens of neocolonialism. The study of elements like inappropriate treatment of culture, political instability, economic alienation, and exploitation of resources will help us understand the current situation of neocolonialism in Africa.

Relevance to the Present-Day Problem and Contribution to the Future Knowledge.

The African nation, soon after their independence, realised that their independence was subject only to a new kind of colonialism. This new form is still affecting socio-economic and political aspects. This new form evolved from slavery to colonialism and finally to neocolonialism. Nkrumah, in his work *The Last Stage of Imperialism,* mentions that colonialism still has to be abolished in Africa. This might manifest in ways that add to the

expense of running the government, in advertising, in the financial system, and in investments that widen the wealth disparity. It serves the purpose of exploitation without being responsible.

This research will shed light on the many facets of neocolonialism's operation and its effects on African people by means of the chosen works. This will help us understand the need to be more self-reliant and less dependent on foreign availabilities, ranging from political to socio-cultural spheres.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o and Ayi Kwei Armah, through their novels, have tried to reflect upon the themes of getting close to Western society in the forms of material acquisition and wealth parallel to the lack of human values, corruption, criticism by their own people leading to identity crisis and isolation; change in ideologies; how their indigenous way of life is endangered; how people are considering the West as the source of obtaining all the good things in life; looking down at one's own cultural identity; involvement of the local elites in embracing Western values and thoughts, frequent injustice to the people by the foreign forces for truth and justice; local elites hiding truth from their own people only to serve foreign masters, knowingly, or unknowingly contributing to the capitalist exploitation; advancement of villages from traditional to modern, but not an optimistic one, rather a destructive in forms of disruption of habitats, distraction from own potentials, social-abuse, emergence of new class and injustice.

The dynamic nature of the term neocolonialism is reflected in the sense that the term is now evolving from neocolonialism to globalisation. Michael Maduagwu asserts that: "… globalization is only the latest stage of European economic and cultural domination of the rest of the world which started with colonialism, went through imperialism and has now arrived at the globalization stage" (65).

The relevance of the term *neocolonialism* could be understood as the realisation that even after independence, Africa just shifted from the former state to a new form of colonialism.

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